



Vancouver Island Section Newsletter

APRIL 2022

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The new R232 SLs.: Mercedes-AMG SL 63 4MATIC and Mercedes-AMG SL 55 4MATIC.
(Photo Mercedes-Benz Group Media).



President's Message

Rob Watson

Congratulations to Alex Currie who received the Northwest Region Membership Chair-of-the-Year award in December for his work keeping the membership in our Section active and thriving. The last two years have required a focus on recruitment and retention and Alex took the initiative to engage strangers about MBCA, placing brochures on any Mercedes-Benz he could find, and maintaining that program of reminders which many of us have received. Alex is an active member of our Board of Directors, and his ideas, engagement, and proactive nature are much appreciated. A well-deserved award!



A pleased-as-punch Alex receiving his 2021 Northwest Region Membership Chair of the Year award from Rob Watson in December

A hearty thanks to Dennis Aitken for volunteering to sit as a Director-at-Large on our Board. His presence is so appreciated. Dennis immediately jumped in to organize two events: the Detailing Workshop with Andrew O'Keefe, and the Taste of the Circuit at the VI Motorsport Circuit. We are looking forward to his fresh ideas and contributions to the Vancouver Island Section.

One of our Section members gave me a heads-up earlier this year that there has been a class action lawsuit settlement for repairs to **certain** Mercedes-Benz vehicles with BlueTEC II emission control systems. The model years affected include 2009–2016 Mercedes-Benz vehicles and 2010–2016 Mercedes-Benz Sprinters. If you believe your vehicle might be affected, you may want to look into it further.

Following in Kevin Carlé's ground-breaking footsteps in our last newsletter, Alex Currie has written *Why I Love SLKs* for this one. He has owned four from each of the three generations and gives us his insightful personal experience with this class.

Although we are "opening up" after the last difficult two years, do continue to stay safe. Dennis O, Hazel, Barry, Alex and Dennis A and I look forward to seeing you at upcoming events.



2021 – 2022 Section Officers

President and Co–Newsletter Editor: Rob Watson
Vice–President and Dealer Ambassador, Victoria: Dennis Ostrowerka
Secretary and Treasurer: Hazel Ostrowerka
Membership Chair: Alex Currie
Co–Newsletter Editor and Dealer Ambassador, Nanaimo: Barry Patchett
Director at large: Dennis Aitken
Honorary Vice–President: Peter Trzewik
Northwest Regional Director: Jeff Shindler (jeff.shindler@shaw.ca)

Section e–mail: mbca.visland@gmail.com

Member Awards, New Members and Renewals

Section members (with the month and year of joining MBCA) who reached their Membership Anniversary milestone between January and April.

5 Years

Wayne Carter (January 2017)
David Holgate (February 2017)

10 Years

Jon Mills (March 2012)

If any of you have not received your Anniversary pin and would like to have it, contact Rob Watson [here](#).

Thank you to Members and Associate Members who renewed their membership between January and April.

Wilf and Betty Beaton
Brian Dane
Richard Ediss
Cris Gray
Doug Logan and Brenda Waksel
John Mallett
Edward Petro
Philip Topallan

Welcome to New Members (with month of joining MBCA)

Julia Abraham (April)





The classic SLs. Front: Mercedes-Benz 300 SL racing sports car from 1952 (W 194). Rear, from right to left: Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Coupé from 1957 (W 198), Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Roadster from 1960 (W 198), Mercedes-Benz 280 SL Pagoda from 1970 (W 113), Mercedes-Benz 350 SL from 1971 (R 107), Mercedes-Benz SL 600 from 1995 (R 129), Mercedes-Benz SL 55 AMG from 2005 (R 230), Mercedes-Benz SL 500 Special Edition "Mille Miglia 417" from 2015 (R 231).

(Photo Mercedes-Benz Group Media).



Why I Love the SLKs by Alex Currie



Most of us will be familiar with arguably the most famous roadster built by Daimler-Benz, the 300SL Gullwing and its convertible top version introduced in the mid 1950s. Equally, many will be familiar with its stable mate, the slightly smaller 190SL. These were the first of the post war production roadsters.

These venerable cars were replaced with the W113 Pagoda SLs which was in production from 1963 - 1971 which is also a coveted car for many.

The R107 SLs based on the W114/115 platform came next, to be followed by the R129 SLs which were based on the W124 E class platform of the day. My Dad had a 450SL which was quick in its day in a straight line but seemed to be nose heavy to me and does not match the handling capabilities of its successors in stock trim.

In the late 1970s and into the 1980s, the industry moved away from convertibles due to safety concerns of the NHTSA agency in the US which stopped development. The 4-passenger R107 SLC sibling to accompany the SLs was the only development of a new body style which was focused on the US market. The R107s soldiered on through this period becoming the longest running series of MB cars having a production run from 1971 to 1989. The R107 was tweaked, and engine displacements increased to as much as 5.6L but no roadsters were developed, that is until Mazda created a buzz in February 1989 with the Miata MX-5.

This initiated the design process which ultimately produced the first generation SLK shown in Turin in 1994. It went into production in 1996 based on the W201 C class platform. The SLK went through two more iterations - the R171 produced from 2004 to 2010, and the R172 which carried the SLK badge from 2011 until 2015 when Daimler rebranded the R172 as an SLC with reduced model availability. Today, the only roadster produced by Daimler AG is the AMG GT Coupe which starts at \$189,000 and is not available as a convertible.

SLK is not just a badge. There is meaning to those letters. S stands for Sport and for the most part these cars, particularly the R170 and R171 versions, meet that criterion. L stands for light weight, which arguably they are but only perhaps when compared to other vehicles. For example, the 2009 SLK has a curb weight of 3472 lb vs. the curb weight of a 2009 E class sedan of 3740 lb. K stands for Kurtz or short, and they are that. The design is forward focused with a long nose, a passenger cabin, and a short rear deck. You realize just how short when a large truck pulls up behind you at a light, particularly when the top is down!





Mercedes-Benz SLK 200 in model series R 170. Exterior photo from left with the folding vario-roof opening.
(Photo Mercedes-Benz Group Media)



Mercedes-Benz SLK 55 AMG official FIA F1™ safety car (R 171, front, and behind it is the C 55 AMG T-model as the medical car).
(Photo Mercedes-Benz Group Media).

Having had two first gen cars (both SLK320s), one second gen, and one third gen cars I am often asked which I like best and my answer is “at the time and place I owned them, they were the best”.

The R170, particularly with the 3.2L V6, is a quick, nimble car with good road handling characteristics, reasonably good fuel economy and is just a great cruiser, albeit a bit stiff on the road than, say, an E class which I have extensive experience with.

They are reliable if maintained and not all that expensive to do so. Twenty thousand km or 1 year is the service interval on most Mercedes these days and the services needed in these cars for most users would be annual, with mainly A service with brake fluid every two to three seasons. As is the case with all Mercedes cars, good battery maintenance is essential. Gremlins can creep in when a battery looks ok but is really not. I got my first 2001 when it was 12 years old, and the second at 17 years old. They were both great cars to own and drive.

The R172 came between the two R170s and was a significant contrast to them. Plusher, more gadget-laden, lots of modern features such as DISTRONIC, Eco Start/Stop, etc., but something got lost between the R170 and the R172. While the 3.5L V6 and the G7 transmission ensured the car was still quick, it seemed to be more of a cruiser; it had lost some of its sporty nature. I attribute that to the fact it was 3 inches longer in wheelbase over the R170/R171 platforms, 15 inches longer overall than the R170, and 11 inches longer than the R171, and 71 inches wide vs 67.5 for its predecessors.

And that brings me to the R171. This car went through one face lift in its cycle, but the changes are subtle. Only four engine combos were offered but most shipped to Canada had the 3.5L V6 and the 2L Supercharged. The styling is keyed off the Mercedes F1 cars of the day as can be seen at the front of the car.

My 2009 SLK55 AMG has the only other engine option the R171 offered which is the 5.4L normally aspirated V8 putting out 355 hp. More than enough to play with! The car has the P30 option which makes the suspension a bit stiffer than the standard SLK55 AMG, but the car is comfortable to ride in. It is sporty, feels light and yes,



short, so it lives up to its name. Driving in regular traffic the car is easy to maneuver, stops extremely well and if you want to play with a Mustang or Camaro in light to light drags, it can stand the test.

It is tame in every day driving through the first third of pedal travel but from there, hang on. You don't drive any V8 with an eye to fuel economy but getting under 10L/100km is easily achievable on the highway.

So, in answer to the question "which of my SLKs do I like best?" It is the 2009 SLK55 AMG, but not entirely because it is my current toy. It is -- engineering-wise -- superior to the R170, particularly when it comes to body twist which is characteristic of most convertibles, and overall performance-wise better than the R172 - setting aside the engine differences - and the fact that the R172 is more a cruiser than the SLK55 AMG which is a road car with attitude.

Finally, the beauty of the SLKs is they deliver miles of smiles every time you get in them. Whether just out for a cruise, a track day, a tour with the club or a coffee to take to the beach and watch the sea, it all just seems right. If it rains, it is 20 seconds to a closed roof.

A very good quality R170 with under 80,000 km on the odometer can be purchased for under \$9,000, and an R171 for between \$13000 and \$17000. The key to a good car is due diligence and provenance.

The SLK R171 are harder to find, given only 242,000 were built world-wide throughout its run and only 85,000 since the 2007 facelift.

Only 290 2009 MY SLK55 AMG models were built world-wide and only 19 were shipped to Canada. How many had the P30 option I do not know, so this adds to my enjoyment, knowing I have a somewhat rare version. It also explains why a good car was so hard to find.

So, if you have a hankering for some pleasant, top-down driving in - to quote Sir Jackie Stewart - "a great wee motorcar", look around for a clean, low mileage (under 80,000km) SLK particularly the R170 and R171, as they provide the best value for the money, particularly if you plan to use it as a seasonal car. Just take the time to do the research on what to look out for (e.g., cracked rear subframe on the R171s, particularly in cars from areas where heavy salt is used and the car driven in winter). Also, seek a service history. Do it right and you will have plenty of smiles per mile.



R172 SLC RedArt Edition
(Photo Mercedes-Benz Group Media)



2022 Event Calendar

<p>JUNE Vancouver Island Motorsport Circuit – A Taste of the Circuit Wednesday, 8 June Organizer: Dennis Aitken</p> <p>Summer Solstice Dinner Thursday, 23 June Organizer: Barry Patchett</p> <p>JULY Show and Shine, and Picnic Sunday, 17 July Organizer: Rob Watson</p> <p>Oak Bay Car Collector Festival Sunday, 24 July Organizer: TBD</p>	<p>AUGUST –TBD</p> <p>SEPTEMBER – TBD</p> <p>OCTOBER Mercedes–Benz Nanaimo New Car and Tech Event Organizer: Barry Patchett</p> <p>NOVEMBER Annual Holiday and Christmas Lunch Organizer: TBD</p>
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Upcoming Events

Vancouver Island Motorsport Circuit – Taste of the Circuit Wednesday, 8 June 2022

Several notices for this event were issued in March and we had a good response. Nine of the ten spots are filled – six are Section members, and three are friends. If you are interested in taking the one remaining spot, it is not too late. Click this [link](#) for further information.

Summary:

Organizer: Dennis Aitken

When: Wednesday, 8 June

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Cost: \$495.00 using your own vehicle, or \$995.00 if using their fleet vehicles. Prices are plus tax.

Where: Vancouver Island Motorsport Circuit, 4063 Cowichan Valley Hwy, Cowichan



Summer Solstice Dinner

Thursday, 23 June 2022

Barry Patchett is looking into holding our Summer Solstice Dinner once again at the Farm Table Inn on Thursday, 23 June. Earlier in the year there was word that the Farm Table Inn was changing the nature of its operation. Their website, however, currently shows its full dining menu, including the Thursday prime rib dinner. Stay tuned.

Summary:

Organizer: Barry Patchett

When: Thursday, 23 June

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Cost: à la carte menu

Where: Probably at the Farm Table Inn, 6755 Cowichan Lake Rd, Lake Cowichan

RSVP: see notification in June.

Vancouver Island Section Show and Shine, and Picnic

Sunday, 17 July 2022

This year we are planning to have a dedicated Show 'n' Shine at Enrico Winery. This will be like last year's wine tour except the inimitable Barry Patchett will judge our cars and prizes will be awarded. A lesson learned from last year was that we were best served by bringing our own picnic lunch to that scenic location. Enrico has excellent wine choices to go with our lunches and I (Rob) know that the wine tasting flight is also excellent.

Summary:

Organizer: Rob Watson

When: Sunday, 17 July

Time: TBD

Cost: Bring your own picnic. Excellent wine and a wine tasting flight available at the Winery.

Where: Enrico Wineries, 3280 Telegraph Rd, Mill Bay

RSVP: see notification in June.

Oak Bay Car Collector Festival

Sunday, 24 July 2022

A video for the 2022 Oak Bay Car Collector Festival on Sunday, 24 July has been posted on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKIRpXA9jVk>). Currently, the Oak Bay event calendar does not show any events for July. As a result, we are tentatively listing it and will confirm our participation in June.

Summary:

Organizer: TBD

When: Sunday, 24 July

Time: All day.

Cost: TBD

Where: Oak Bay Avenue, Oak Bay

RSVP: see notification in June.



Recent Events

Malahat Chalet Brunch

Sunday, 13 February, 2022

Rob Watson

Photos by Rob Watson and Lisa Mallett

Our small group of 12 were greeted to an unexpectedly warm, sunny day for our Sunday brunch – highly unusual for mid–February. We must have been itching to spread our social wings because we arrived just before 10 a.m. but did not leave until well after noon with over two hours of catching up. Needless to say, we had a good time.



Is it possible that this was February on the Island? We are lucky to live here.



L to R: Leo Vanderven, Doug Logan, Brenda Waksel, Hazel and Dennis Ostrowerka, and Barbara Bragadir taking a breather between conversations.



L to R: Lisa and John Mallett, Linda Derrick, Rob Watson, Betty and Wilf Beaton on that glorious February day.



GAIN Detailing Workshop with Andrew O’Keefe

Saturday, 9 April, 2022

Preamble and photos by Rob Watson

It was a small group of nine that attended Andrew O’Keefe’s Detailing Workshop. A miss for those who did not or could not attend. Andrew is always enthusiastic and passionate about his craft. He gave us information, insight, and techniques on how to take care of cars. One of his most important pieces of advice was the importance of regular washing and cleaning.

We learned so much about the craft, products, and equipment required to detail a car. There was a lot of information to absorb and we are grateful to Andrew for preparing his instructions on *How to Wash a Car*, reproduced below. The instructions include the products from Meticulous Detailing that Andrew uses. Information about Meticulous is listed after Andrew’s instructions.

Our heartfelt thanks to Andrew for his work and effort into preparing and delivering this workshop for us.

GAIN Detail Studio – How to Wash a Car

Saturday, 9 April, 2022

Notes provided by Andrew O’Keefe,
Operations Manager - Gain Detail Studio,
With minor edits by Rob Watson

Here is my personal order of operations that I use to properly wash and clay bar a vehicle:

PRE-WASH PREPARATION

1. Pre-rinse to cool the car surface and remove larger debris from the finish.
2. Degrease the lower 1/3rd of the body with **“Hot Shot” degreaser** and pressure rinse clean.
3. Continue to degrease wheel arches, door jambs, trunk jamb, and fuel door and pressure rinse clean.
4. Clean wheels one at a time with **“Bocar Iron & Fallout remover”** or **“P&S Iron Buster”**.
5. Keep wheel saturated with Iron remover and allow to dwell for about 5 min before agitating.
6. Use a **“wheel woollies” set of brushes** for the barrel of the wheel and in between the caliper/barrel.
7. Use a **detail factory ultra-soft brush** for the wheel face, lug nut recesses, and painted calipers.
8. Rinse thoroughly and inspect, and then move onto the next wheel.

FOAM BATHING

9. Foam Bathe the vehicle using **MTM cherry foam**, and **MTM foam cannon**.
10. Allow to dwell for 5 -10 min, keep saturated and do not allow to dry on surfaces.
11. Pressure rinse thoroughly.

WASHING

12. We want to segregate the areas with lighter debris from areas with greater concentrations such as the lower body. So we are going to wash from the top down, also dividing it into three quadrants – top – middle – and lower body.
13. **Using two buckets** - Fill one bucket with fresh water and **“Grit Guardz with Dirt Wall system”**.
14. Fill the other bucket with fresh water and a couple cap fulls of **P&S pearl auto shampoo**.
15. Using a **fresh wash mitt by “The Rag Company”**, get the mitt soapy and begin washing the vehicle from the top down.



16. Flip the mitt frequently and inspect for dirt or debris. Rinse and agitate the wash mitt frequently in the clean bucket, scrubbing gently against the “dirt wall” then dip the mitt into your soapy wash bucket again and continue to wash.
17. When finished, rinse the vehicle thoroughly.

CLAY BAR PROCEDURE

18. With vehicle still wet, apply a generous and even mist application of “**Bocar Iron & Fallout remover**” or “**P&S Iron Buster**” to the paint finish to help dissolve ferrous metal deposits. Allow product to dwell for 5-10 min, and then pressure rinse thoroughly.
19. Fill a spray bottle with “**Carpro Eraser**”. Get a new “**Gtechniq Clay bar**” and submerge it into hot water for a few minutes to soften it.
20. Knead the bar flat, stretching a bit to better contour the body panels. Generously mist one body panel at a time and gently glide the clay bar across the finish to remove any remaining surface impurities. Check your clay bar frequently for debris and listen carefully ensuring that you don’t hear any slight scratching of the paint’s surface – as it could indicate that you’ve picked up a dirt or iron particle. If you do happen to pick up debris, pick the contaminant out of the clay bar, and re-knead in in on itself creating a fresh surface.
21. Pressure rinse car thoroughly.
22. Dry car using air gun and filtered compressed air, or “**Big Boi Buddy**”. Catch drips using your favorite drying towel.

With many options to choose from, you can explore the vast supply available at Meticulous Detailing. You can see their website and products at <https://meticulousdetailing.ca>. They can be reached (250) 882-4696 or info@meticulousdetailing.ca.

Editor’s note: Meticulous Detailing will provide a 10% discount when you identify yourself as an MBCA member.



A new Mercedes-Benz luxuriating in a foam bath.



It was definitely warmer inside. Andrew showing us the various products and equipment he uses.

